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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to begin to refute the deficit approach to the verbal abilities of poor children. The contention was that data collected on poor children's verbal abilities had been done in incorrect social situations. Prior research had indicated that language development is innate and that disadvantaged children will be nonverbal and/or nonsensical in situations they see as threatening, while in nonthreatening situations they will display an adequate verbal ability. The object of this research was to vary sociolinguistic variables and to create symmetrical and asymmetrical situations in order to test the propositions that such variations will (1) elicit better speech samples from poor children and (2) depress the quality and quantity of speech from middle class children. Only socioeconomic comparisons were made, though all the children were of Mexican American descent, as adjudged by Spanish surname. The sample of 40 preschool children, aged 4 and 5, was evenly divided between middle class and poor children according to which of 3 day care centers they attended--1 free, and located in the core area; the others having substantial tuitional costs. It was concluded that, when poor children are made comfortable via a symmetrical situation, they speak with greater volubility and grammatical maturity, but that middle class children function well in all social situations. It is suggested that a more accurate definition of socioeconomic status be investigated. (HBC)

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A SOCIOLINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION

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For
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SITUATIONS AND LANGUAGE: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION

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University of New Mexico

Albuquerque, New Mexico

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF
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Office of Education
National Center for Educational Research and Development

SITUATIONS AND LANGUAGE: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION

Rosalie Maggio Donofrio, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Foundations
The University of New Mexico, 1972

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this research is to begin to refute the deficit approach to the verbal abilities of poor children. It is the investigator's contention that data collected on poor children's verbal abilities was done in incorrect social situations. Current research indicates that language development is innate. Evidence now indicates, also, that "disadvantaged" children will be non-verbal and/or nonsensical in situations they see as threatening, while in non-threatening situations they display an adequate verbal ability. It is the object of this research to vary socio-linguistic variables, and create symmetrical and asymmetrical situations, in order to test the propositions that such variations will: 1) elicit better speech samples from poor children, and 2) depress the quality and quantity of speech from middle class children.

Procedure and Methods

No ethnic, only socioeconomic comparisons were made;

all the children were of Mexican-American descent, as adjudged by Spanish-surname, and the sample was evenly divided between middle class and poor children in accordance to which day care center they attended--one free, and located in the core area; the other having substantial tuitional costs. Five children were subjected to each treatment by two interviewers as demonstrated by the following diagram.

	Middle Class Children		Poor Children	
	Dialect	No Dialect	Dialect	No Dialect
Middle Class Questions	1 asymmetry	2 symmetry	3 asymmetry	4 most asymmetrical
Chicano Questions	5 most asymmetrical	6 more asymmetrical	7 symmetry	8 more asymmetrical

The quality of the elicited speech was determined by use of Terminable Units; the quantity was determined by a running word count. Cuing by interviewers was also determined.

Results

Middle class children have greater volubility and slightly more grammatical maturity no matter the situation ($p < .10$). Poor children performed best in the symmetrical situation ($p < .025$). Asymmetrical situations for poor

children were found in Cells 4 and 8; the only asymmetrical situation for middle class children was Cell 6.

Conclusions

When poor children are made comfortable via a symmetrical situation, they speak with greater volubility and grammatical maturity. Middle class children function well in all social situations. The study requires replication using alternative parameters and there is a pressing need for a more accurate definition of socioeconomic status.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
LIST OF TABLES		x
CHAPTER		
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	5
	Deprivation Theory	5
	Genetic Inferiority and Social Pathology	12
	Culture Fair Tests and Intervention Programs	20
	The Neglected Situation	22
	Child Language Research	28
III.	METHODS AND PROCEDURES	42
	Description of Activities	42
	Analysis of Data	47
	Justification for T-Unit	48
IV.	ANALYSIS OF DATA	54
V.	CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	69
REFERENCES		80

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1.	Running Word Count Mean Per Treatment.....	56
1.1	Word Count (ANOVA).....	58
1.2	Graph of Running Words for all Subjects.....	59
2.	Terminable Units Mean Per Treatment.....	60
3.	Words Per Terminable Unit Mean Per Treatment.....	62
3.1	Words Per Terminable Unit (ANOVA).....	63
4.	Cues from Interviewers Mean Per Treatment.....	64
5.	Words Per Cue Mean Per Treatment.....	66
5.1	Words Per Cue (ANOVA).....	68

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

That poor children have an adequate, though non-standard, mode of speech has been demonstrated by researchers. However, the research has been limited in that most of the literature deals with black, urban-ghetto children in situations without any statistical controls. In many instances, the researchers appear to have stumbled upon their findings and interpreted these data on the basis of intuition. Rarely is there literature on the quality and quantity of poor children's speech supported by statistical analysis of the evidence. True, situational variables, such as symmetry and the use of separate registers for home and school, have been documented by Labov (1969) and Houston (1971), but there is very little available in the literature which adequately demonstrates the independent and interactive effects of the situational variables which may contribute to children's speech or, more specifically, its volubility.

This researcher feels documentation of this kind is necessary if cogent, well-directed curricula and teacher-instructional materials are to be formulated which will reach the child "where he is at" when he enters school. This is particularly true in the Southwest and for this reason

the study will be directed specifically toward the Chicano* child. There is a pressing need for relevant social considerations in our public schools. The historical and cultural contributions of the Chicanos are now being incorporated into learning materials, but the most effective means of presentation for these materials are still unknown. If this study can reveal, even in the grossest dimensions, in which situations Chicano children attend best, then perhaps significant inroads can be made toward the fullest use of these materials. To paraphrase Labov: before any adult can find out what a child can do, he must enter into the correct social situation with that child, since a social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behavior. To quote Labov (1969, p. 11), the above ". . . is just what many teachers cannot do." It will also be interesting, and perhaps the most significant outcome of the research, to see if middle-class children, when placed in an asymmetrical or incorrect social situation, will become relatively non-verbal.

A recent finding of the investigators in conjunction with this author's work done at the Albuquerque Model Cities Day Care Centers has pointed up the need for research of

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*The term Chicano is used here only in the context of popular nomenclature; in no way does this author wish to imply, state, or have political overtones attached to its meaning.

this nature. While gathering data on the beneficial aspects of the Day Care Center curriculum, the Leiter International Performance Scale was administered to a random sample of 45 Black, Anglo, and Chicano preschoolers. The testers coincided with the sample of children in that this group contained one Black, one Anglo, and one Chicano. The results are interesting; the findings were that lower class Chicano children examined by a Chicano, whose characteristics precisely duplicate those outlined in this document, scored a mean of 5.06 I.Q. points higher than did Blacks or Anglos tested by the same examiner. Of course, this sample of children is too small to have universal applicability; however, the tendency for Chicano children to score higher with a Chicano test administrator may be an effect that warrants further investigation. The structured interview situation may be an excellent point of departure for this research.

A free-speech situation may be the best means in which to assess linguistic ability, but this is not the scope of this study. The aim is rather to discern situations which foster linguistic performance; realizing a lack of expertise in the area of assessment, the author will leave that to the linguists, per se. The concern is with the maximal production of whatever dialect or speech patterns Chicano children normally employ. The situations will be structured, because it is felt that this is more

in keeping with reality; i.e., school, interview, and intelligence testing situations. The researcher hopes to pinpoint some of the sociolinguistic variables which may influence, positively or negatively, the verbal performance of lower and middle class Chicano children.

Before attempting any linguistic assessment of speech, researchers must first establish a realistic basis from which to gather the language samples of Chicano children. Because this has not been adequately done in prior research, this experiment will endeavor to create that basis. In a somewhat delimited design and in keeping with the essential definition of sociolinguistics, this study will ". . . seek to determine . . . who speaks what variety of what language to whom, when, and concerning what" (Fishman, 1971, p. 2).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Deprivation Theory

"Culturally deprived," "intellectually deprived," and "socially disadvantaged" are popular terms in educational literature. After years of neglect, these children and the problems which they confront in school and in the job market are key topics in America. The rush toward prevention and/or remediation has gathered momentum over the last decade. Evaluative, educational, and research programs are under way. These educational efforts are traditional, relatively unimaginative, and based on the image of children as presented by the theory of cultural deprivation, one of whose earliest exponents was Robert J. Havighurst. As early as 1964, he first set the guidelines for the identification of this target population identifying them as groups with the following characteristics: They

1. are at the bottom of the American society in terms of income;
2. have a rural background;
3. suffer from social and economic discrimination at the hands of the majority of the society;

4. are widely distributed in the United States. While they are visible in the big cities, they are present in all except the very high income communities. There are many of them in rural areas (Havighurst, 1964, pp. 26 & 27).

Racially and ethnically the culturally deprived are fairly evenly divided between whites and nonwhites. They are:

1. Negroes from the rural South who have recently migrated to Northern industrial cities;
2. Whites from the rural South and Southern mountains who have migrated recently to Northern industrial cities;
3. Puerto Ricans who have migrated to a few Northern industrial cities;
4. Mexicans with a rural background who migrated into the West and Midwest;
5. European immigrants with a rural background, mainly those from East and Southern Europe (Havighurst, 1964, p. 27).

An updating of this list would include Indians, but irrespective of the racial and ethnic distinctions, there appears one prevailing characteristic that Havighurst mentions only in passing; all are at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. This author contends that poverty, rather than race or ethnicity, may be the major

factor contributing to deprivation. Hence, this paper will refer to the target population as poor. For further documentation that socioeconomic status, rather than race or ethnicity, may be a cause of cultural deprivation see: Brookover & Gottlieb, 1963; Charters, 1963; Davis, 1951; Glatt, 1965.

The common view of the poor child as generated by deprivation theorists speaks to deficiencies. In relative terms, the poor child has a disadvantage when compared to another child from a more affluent social milieu and he is at a definite disadvantage when trying to live competently in an urban, industrial, and democratic society. He may function well in the context of the reservation, ghetto, or farm, but he is drastically handicapped in the task of growing up to lead a satisfying and competent life in American society. There is perhaps no more succinct statement concerning the lack of "socially useful" skills among the "disadvantaged child" than the following made by Havighurst:

> . . . there is substantial doubt that the socially disadvantaged children in our big cities have <u>any</u> positive qualities of potential value in urban society in which they are systematically better than the children of families who participate fully in the mass culture. The writer does not know any comparative study which showsAmerican lower lower class children to be superior in any positive respect to American upper working-class or middle-class children. As a group they are inferior in tests of spatial perception, for example, as well as in tests of vocabulary and arithmetic. (Havighurst, 1964, pp. 28-29)

Bernstein studied the language behavior of British families to discern how they relate to children's intellectual development, and his findings have had a significant impact on sociolinguistic thinking in this country. He concludes there are two types of language: the elaborated and restricted codes. The elaborated code consists of communication which is individual, with a message that is specific to a particular situation, topic, or person. It permits expression of a wider and more complex range of thought, tending toward discrimination among cognitive and affective content which is generally more differentiated and precise. The restricted code, on the other hand, is stereotyped, limited, and condensed, lacking the specificity and exactness needed for precise conceptualization. This is the language of implicit meaning, easily understood and commonly shared, in which sentences are short, simple, often unfinished; the basic mode is to limit intentionally the range and detail of conceptualization and information involved. (Hess and Shipman, 1965). Bernstein's study (1960) revealed that these language types are statistically related to social class and that lower class families generally employ the restricted code, which is characterized by:

1. Short, grammatically simple, often unfinished sentences with a poor syntactical form stressing the active voice

2. Simple and repetitive use of conjunctions (so, then, because).
3. Little use of subordinate clauses to break down the initial categories of the dominant subject.
4. Inability to hold a formal subject through a speech sequence; thus, a dislocated informational content is facilitated.
5. Rigid and limited use of adjectives and adverbs.
6. Constraint on the self-reference pronoun; frequent use of personal pronouns.
7. Frequent use of statements where the reason and conclusion are confounded to produce a categoric statement.
8. A large number of statements/phrases which signal a requirement for the previous speech sequence to be reinforced: "Wouldn't it? You see? You know?" etc. This process is termed "sympathetic circulatory."
9. Individual selection from a group of idiomatic phrases or sequences will occur.
10. The individual qualification is implicit in the sentence organization.

Children reared in an atmosphere characterized by this code, according to Bernstein, never learn the "why" of things, because nothing is ever explained to them; he implies that should this occur repeatedly, children may

lose the habit of asking why. Since the vocabulary is restricted, children are not allowed practice in vocabulary extention; at the same time, the restricted code evokes authority via categoric statements with the result that children are ordered about; their natural curiosity is pushed back, ultimately lost, and, poor children soon learn not to think for themselves. This type of environment tends to produce children with certain personal deficits, the most obvious of which is the likelihood of having difficulty in school. Bernstein also contends that the difficulty will continue unless these children learn the elaborated code that is expected and necessary for success in school.

Bereiter, Engelman and colleagues (1966a) amplify Bernstein in the following statement:

> From our earlier work in teaching concrete logical operations it became evident that culturally deprived children do not just think at an immature level: many of them do not think at all. That is, they do not show any of the mediating processes which we ordinarily identify with thinking. They cannot hold on to questions while searching for an answer. They cannot compare perceptions in any reliable fashion. They are oblivious of even the most extreme discrepancies between their actions and statements as they follow one another in a series. They do not just give bad explanations. They cannot give explanations at all, nor do they seem to have any idea of what it is to explain an event. The question and answer process which is the care of orderly thinking is completely foreign to most of them. (Bereiter, et al., 1966a, p. 107)

These authors maintain further that the language of culturally deprived children is not merely an underdeveloped version of standard English, "but is basically a non-logical

mode of expressive behavior" (Bereiter, et al., 1966a, p. 112).

Deutsch (1965, 1963) studied poor children with the techniques of experimental psychology. He finds they have inferior auditory discrimination, faulty visual discrimination, and inferior judgement concerning time, number, and other basic concepts. He contends that these deficits are not due to physical defects of eyes, ears, or brain, but rather they are caused by inferior discriminatory perceptions (habits) in hearing, seeing, and thinking. Supposedly, the family environment does not teach these children to pay attention to the visual scene, or to what is being said around them. That Deutsch agrees with Bernstein and Bereiter is obvious, for he also states that poor children suffer in school performance because they have not learned to listen to the teacher, or any other important person, and they cannot see things as they are shown. These children come to school lacking these skills and never manage to catch up with their middle-class counterparts; Deutsch has proposed the cumulative deficit idea to explain the ever widening gap between poor and middle-class children as they progress through school.

The broad picture of the poor child as drawn by the deprivation theorists is one of deficiencies and failures. (See also Charters, 1963; Estes, 1953; Garretson, 1928; Haggard, 1954; Katz, 1964; Lewis, 1965; Moynihan,

1968; Russman, 1961; Tehan, 1962; Young, 1954) He appears to lack a variety of skills because he has failed to develop in the same way as the middle-class child. Such images of the poor child are augmented by low school grades, the drop out rate, and, most often, performance on standardized tests of intelligence and achievement. This image is widely accepted because it has the weight of empirical evidence on its side; as Havighurst (1964) points out, there is an impressive array of data that tends to indicate that the poor child cannot perform on a par with the better off middle-class child. The finding that poor, often minority, children score one standard deviation below the national mean on standard tests of intelligence is nearly universal. (See: Carlson & Henderson, 1950; Jensen, 1961, 1969a; Pasamanick, 1951; Shuey, 1966.)

Genetic Inferiority and Social Pathology

The issue of genetic inferiority may not be germaine to the scope of this paper; however, the writer feels a brief discussion of the issue is necessary. Social pathology is, indeed, central to the deprivation ideology, but very often in the literature and discussions, the notion of genetic inferiority is implicitly linked with social pathology. There seems to be a linear relationship: genetic inferiority may cause social pathology and the

resulting deprivation from which most poor children never recover.

The most highly visible exponent of the genetic argument is Arthur R. Jensen (1969a). In his long article for the Harvard Educational Review he rather persuasively juxtaposes data on the heritability of I.Q. and the observed differences between groups and goes on to build a fairly convincing case citing that intervention and/or educational programs for lower class children are generally failing due to the high heritability of intelligence. Jensen puts forth the hypothesis that social class and racial differences in average I.Q. are largely due to differences in gene distribution of the population. He claims that nature, not simply nurture, is the more plausible explanation for the mean difference of 15 I.Q. points between blacks and whites and the even greater I.Q. differences between professionals and manual laborers within the white population.

Jensen's article was directed primarily to academicians, but Eysenck (1971) and Herrnstein (1971) have brought the argument for genetic inferiority to the attention of the broader lay audience. Eysenck's book is particularly inflammatory as there is something in it to insult almost everyone except WASPS and Jews. The basic theses are that I.Q. is a highly heritable characteristic of both the black and white population; blacks typically

score lower than whites on I.Q. tests; blacks in the United States are probably a non-random, lower-I.Q. sample of the native African population; and finally, the differences between black and white I.Q. probably represents basic genetic differences between the races. In a maddeningly Aryan tone he suggests the following as an explanation for differences in mean I.Q.:

> White slavers wanted dull beasts of burden, ready to work themselves to death in the plantations, and under these conditions intelligence would have been counter-selective. Thus, there is every reason to expect that the particular sub-sample of the Negro race which is constituted of American Negroes is not an unselected sample of Negroes, but has been selected throughout history according to criteria which would put the highly intelligent at a disadvantage. The inevitable outcome of such selection would, of course, be a gene pool lacking some of the genes making for higher intelligence. (Eysenck, p. 42)

The progeny of Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Greeks shows significantly lower I.Q.'s because their ancestors were poor samples of the original population. They were less able, less intelligent and were forced via circumstance to emigrate.

Herrnstein (1971) in a review of psychometric literature concludes that I.Q. testing is psychology's most outstanding accomplishment and, on the basis of population statistics, that individual differences and social-class differences in I.Q. are highly heritable. This is true for the present, and through the forces of environmental improvement, probably will become more so.

Herrnstein is convinced that society will become more strongly meritocratic based largely on inherited differences in intelligence. He postulates that in the future (1) heritability of I.Q. will rise; (2) social mobility will become more strongly related to inherited I.Q. differences; (3) most bright people will be gathered in the top of the social structure, with the I.Q. dregs at the bottom; (4) many at the bottom will not have the intelligence for new jobs; and (5) the meritocracy will be built not just on inherited intelligence but on all traits affecting success, which will presumably become correlated characters.

The image of poor children as postulated by these authors may or may not be true. There is the likelihood that further research might yield more positive information in favor of either the genetic or environmental hypothesis. For the time being, because the environmental hypothesis is more easily tested, it has more evidence and it is to this evidence that we shall direct our attention. Before leaving the issue of genetic inferiority, there is one point that the above cited authors have seemingly neglected. Jane Mercer from the University of California at Riverside has pointed out that indeed there may be a gene, or a combination thereof, which contributes to intellectual inferiority, but it is virtually impossible that only blacks, Chicanos, Greeks, etc., should possess it and

Caucasians should not. After all, with whom do these inferior types share the greatest genotypic characteristics? The most cursory observation reveals that the greatest gene pool sharing is not so much within these groups, but rather between these inferior types and Caucasians. Thoughts concerning the origin of the weak strain lead to some interesting ramifications.

The majority of the investigations dealing with the ill-effects of the environment are limited in that they focus on the Negro culture. But, since this author believes poverty, rather than ethnicity, is at the core of environmental influences, the information concerning the Negroes will be taken as relatively, though not wholly, applicable to Chicanos, Indians, Southern Europeans, etc. The justification here is that the lack of affluence, in many instances, yields comparable living conditions, regardless of racial origin. Most social research has been measured against an idealized norm of American behavior. The normative approach tends to measure behavior in terms of the way that middle-class America is supposed to behave; the result of such research is not a description of the way poor children behave, but rather how far they deviate from the normative system as defined by the middle-class--see the deprivation theorists. The result is typically a denial of any culture and values of poor children. Citing Baratz and Baratz (1970) the denial of culture is

> constant with the melting-pot mythology and it stems from a very narrow conceptualization of culture by non-anthropologists. . . . In the absence of an ethno-historical perspective, when differences appear in behavior, intelligence, or cognition, they are explained as evidence of genetic defects or as the evidence of the negative effects of slavery, poverty, and discrimination. Thus, the social scientist interprets differences in behavior as genetic pathology or the alleged pathology of the environment (Baratz and Baratz, 1970, p. 32).

For the social pathologist, then, the "something wrong" (or the illness) with poor children is transmitted by the family; the primary vehicle for the transfer is the inadequate mother.

Relying heavily on the deprivation theory, it has been hypothesized that the ghetto mother does not provide her child with adequate social and sensory stimulation. (Hunt, 1961) On the one hand, inadequate is taken as meaning that there is so much sensory stimulation bombarding the child that he is inwardly turning out. (Deutsch, C., 1968). On the other hand, social and sensory stimulation is inadequate because the ghetto mother does not engage in one-to-one social interactions, resulting in the failure to teach her child to talk and think. (Gordon, 1968) Other studies of the social interactions of the ghetto home (Kagan, 1968) suggest that the amount of social stimulation may be quantitatively similar for poor and middle-class children; the quantitative deficit explanation may be evolving into a qualitative one. That is, the poor child

receives as much or more stimulation as does his middle-class counterpart, but the stimulation is not as distinctive.

Since the ghetto home is not organized around regular meals and may tend to appear chaotic to the observer, it is suggested that the ghetto mother manages her home in such a way which fails to develop a proper sense of time and space. (Henry, 1965) Further, that poor mothers neither talk nor systematically read to their children is seen as fostering the deficit in intellectual growth, language development, and ultimately school success. Mothers do pay lip-service to achievement and motivation, but investigators like Katz (1968) see a great disparity between word and deed--these mothers do not help with homework, join the PTA, or become involved with activities associated with school, and this lack of commitment from ghetto mothers is seen as adding to the failure of poor children in the school situation. Hess and Shipman (1965a & b) report that the mothers of poor children do urge their children to learn to read, not because the activity will yield an educational reward, but more because reading is an assumed behavioral norm.

Investigations by Bear, Brophy, Hess and Shipman (1968), doubtless influenced by Bernstein, furthered the inadequate mother hypothesis. They collected data from 163 black mothers and their four-year-old children in

interviews and laboratory task situations. The mothers were divided into four groups comprised of professionals, skilled, unskilled-family intact, and unskilled-father absent. Data were collected by social-workers during home visits and in theoretical-laboratory situations where mothers were asked to respond to such questions as: "What would you say to your child on the first day of school?" The results show that the verbal behavior of middle-class Negro mothers is more typically mainstream as evidenced by their use of the elaborate code. Their explanations were akin to the teacher-learner situations found in school. The lower-class mothers told their children what to do in each situation, thus eliminating the opportunity for discovery. To summarize,

> The cognitive environment of the culturally disadvantaged child is one in which behavior is controlled by imperatives rather than by attention to the individual characteristics of a specific situation, and one in which behavior is neither mediated by verbal cues which offer opportunities for using language as a tool for labeling, ordering, and manipulating stimuli in the environment, nor mediated by teaching that relates events to one another and the present to the future. The meaning of deprivation would thus seem to be a deprivation of meaning in the early cognitive relationships between mother and child. This environment produces a child who relates to authority rather than to rationale, who may often be compliant, but is not reflective in his behavior, and for whom the consequences of an act are largely considered in terms of immediate punishment or reward rather than future effects and long-range goals (Hess & Shipman, 1970, p. 103).

Culture Fair Tests and Intervention Programs

Although the deprivation theory has the weight of empirical evidence on its side, it is not the only way in which poor children are viewed. In particular, a group of educators from the University of Chicago felt that most of the abilities of poor children were wasted or misdirected because teachers failed to understand their basic cultural habits (Davis, 1951). Until these thoughts became popular in educational literature, most of the classification of children was done via standard-type tests of intelligence; the basic assumption of these instruments was that intelligence was almost wholly a function of an individual's genetic equipment (Angelino & Shedd, 1955). While these educators did not doubt that innate potentialities existed, they postulated that standardized tests only measured a child's present abilities which were the product of both innate factors and experiences. To infer that differences between test scores of two individuals represent innate differences is also to infer that they have had the same experiences. Obviously, not all children have similar backgrounds; therefore, it is apparent that standardized intelligence tests are biased in favor of certain groups. If schools were to compare the learning abilities of groups

or individuals, they should have instruments comprised of items or situations with which children have had equal experiences. Ergo, the culture fair or culture free test which sought to eliminate cultural factors while appraising problem-solving ability. The more refined efforts toward this end are the Cattell Culture-Free Intelligence Test, the Davis-Ellis Games, and Raven's Progressive Matrices. Research into the effectiveness of these tests generally yields the same dreary results as do the culture biased tests: children from the higher socioeconomic strata consistently perform more efficiently (Angelino & Shedd, 1955; Coleman & Ward, 1955; Fowler, 1957; Haggard, 1954).

Failures such as these, then, seemingly reinforced the notion of deprivation and caused educators to steer a new course. It was felt that since poverty tends ". . . to set limits upon the potential mental growth of the child . . . an intervention program [must be] instituted which resocializes or reeducates the child toward more effective cognitive strategies" (Hess & Shipman, 1970, p. 103).

The most visible intervention program for poor children has been Project Head Start. It is modeled, in part, after intervention ideologies as proposed by Montessori, Bereiter-Engleman, or the Bank Street Model. Critics of Head Start are numerous: Cawley, 1968; Cicerelli, 1969; Coleman, 1966; Jensen, 1969a; Kean, 1970; Osborn, 1969; Shore, 1971; Vane, 1971. And, like the culture fair tests,

Project Head Start, which also appeared to be a stroke of genius, in the light of the deprivation theory, is also a seeming failure. The post-mortems on the effects of Head Start are at best unsubstantiated and at worst discouraging.

The Neglected Situation*

Maslow (1944) defined intelligence as the efficiency of behaving in a particular situation. But what of the situation in which tests, culture fair or standard-types, are administered? What is the situational logic of intervention and education programs? In what kinds of situations were data to reinforce the deprivation theory collected? It appears that all the data on poor children and their families were collected in interviews or interview-like situation, including tests and observations. These, in all likelihood, may not be situations in which poor children or their families behave most efficiently.

Culture fair tests were probably administered in one-to-one or group situations where an interviewer/tester and child met for the first time. This may have traumatized the child to the point where his performance was impaired. One-to-one, tutorial, situations may be logical extensions

*E. Goffman, The neglected situation, in J. J. Gumperz and D. Hymes, eds: The Ethnography of Communication, Amer. Anthro., 1964, 66:6, Part 2, 133-136.

of the middle-class home, but it is doubtful that they coincide with the events in the homes of poor children. It is no wonder, then, that the upper socioeconomic class children performed consistently better despite any claims at "fairness." The test was culture bound because of the situation.

Standardized testing situations, interviews, and observations by middle-class researchers (see: Bereiter, et al., 1966; Bernstein, 1960; Deutsch, 1963; Havighurst, 1964; Hess & Shipman, 1970) have been at the foundation of what is now the theory of deprivation. It should be mentioned that despite the insistence that the home is the chief cause of the child's deficit, the supporting data consist almost entirely of either (1) responses to sociological survey-type questionnaires or (2) interaction situations contrived in educational laboratories (Baratz & Baratz, 1970, p. 37). (There is no field work which gives a description of what actually does go on in the home where the deficit arises.) And, as will be developed more fully later in this writing, these are not situations in which poor children behave efficiently; interviews, tests, and observations may cause defense postures wherein responses are inaccurate, ranging from nonesense to silence.

The deprivation theory has led to educational practices which are, at best, unrealistic in terms of current linguistic and anthropological data and, at worst,

ethnocentric and racist (Baratz & Baratz, 1970). Poor children are seen as verbally destitute and linguistically underdeveloped. The deficit view of poor children is devastating for it has reinforced thinking in terms of social pathology caused by genetic inferiority, poor familial care, and/or inadequate mothering. Poor children, particularly those from ethnic and racially divergent backgrounds, are seen as "sick." On this basis educators make the following assumptions:

1. when they enter school, the disadvantaged children are not capable of learning in the standard educational environment.
2. a great part of the inability to learn is due to inadequate mothering.
3. that the milieu of poverty does not provide sensory stimulation for cognitive growth (Baratz & Baratz, 1970).

Intervention is called for either in the home, per se, or by removing the child from the home to a special educational program to counteract the home's deleterious effects. Gordon (1968) recommends a crash program for the ghetto mother which would teach her how to talk to her children and, in turn, teach them how to think. Caldwell (1968, 1967) and Shaefer (1969) outline the "professionalization of motherhood;" a specialist should be introduced into the home who would provide the missing stimulation to children

and, also, teach mothers how to raise their children. Even more insidious is Caldwell's notion of the Inevitable Hypothesis which advocates intervention at earlier and earlier ages--as early as three months--to head off the deficits inherent in the poor home. The ultimate end to these recommendations seems to be (1) a preoccupation with intervention at birth or shortly after to offset the effects of the inadequate environment; (2) the rejection of intervention's effects unless the child is totally removed from the home to be raised and educated by specialists; and (3) a rejection of the environmentalist notion in favor of a program of selective eugenics for those who appear incapable of meeting the needs of technology (Baratz & Baratz, 1970).

Many of the intervention programs, as cited earlier, have failed. Baratz and Baratz (1970) best summarize the cause of the failures.

> The early childhood programs, as well as public schools, fail in the long run because they define educability in terms of a child's ability to perform within an alien culture; yet they make no attempt to teach him systematically new cultural patterns. . . . Educability, for culturally different children, should be defined primarily as the ability to learn new cultural patterns within the experience base and the culture with which the child is already familiar. The initial test scores of culturally different children must not be misevaluated as evidence of "educability," but rather should be viewed as evidence of the degree to which the child is familiar with the mainstream system upon which tests are based both in content and presentation (Baratz & Baratz, 1970, p. 70).

The intervention program which most blatantly disregards the advice is the much touted preschool based on the Bereiter-Engelman ideolgy. They felt that the traditional intervention programs were not helping poor children, because in order for them to "catch up" with middle-class children, the preschool atmosphere must be highly structured and entirely academic. A well-rounded approach, which implies the systematic teaching of new cultural patterns, is incompatible with the goals of catching up. Summarizing their rationale, Bereiter and Engelman state,

> Were it not for the time limitations involved, the enrichment strategy would be perfectly adequate. If privileged children learn what they do from certain experiences, disadvantaged children should be able to learn those things from the same experiences--given enough time. But time is the least available resource in the education of disadvantaged children. A normal preschool program may comprise only 500 hours--a meager time allotment in which to try to overcome disadvantages that accumulate over some 20,000 hours (the approximate number of hours a child is awake between the age of one and the time he enters kindergarten) (Bereiter & Engelman, 1966b, p. 9).

Unfortunately, there is no substantial body of data which clearly indicates that the Academic Preschool or any other intervention ideology is successful. Could these programs fail because they attempt to remediate deficits in accordance with the image of poor children as seen by the deprivation theorists, without ever considering that data supporting the deprivation theory may be fallacious--i.e., collected in the incorrect situation?

The social pathology view, and even the genetic inferiority argument, may be the result of faulty assumptions based on questionable data. It appears as though theorists assume that the language samples, as found in interviews and I.Q. tests, are the index of intellectual ability. Clearly, however, both the interview and I.Q. tests are based upon the supposed achievements of the normal middle-class child--one who is culturally and, perhaps, developmentally different and/or better off than the typical poor child. These middle-class measures may not tap the behavioral expertise of the poor child and this may account for the nearly universal result which places these children one standard deviation below the mean. Faulty intellectual measuring situations (interview + I.Q. tests) yield, and may continue to perpetuate the social pathology and genetic inferiority notions. If, in fact, the deprivation theorists have incorrectly collected, and subsequently misinterpreted data, educational programs may be guilty of the fulfillment of negative prophecies (see: Rest, 1970; Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968), or may be trying to fill in holes that do not exist. As Baratz and Baratz (1970) neatly summarize: we may be trying to pour water into a pitcher already filled with wine. And, when men named Carl [Bereiter] and Siegfried [Engelman] speak of "educational blitzkrieg," "verbal bombardment," and deal out "punishment" designed to teach

a poor child "what is right," the whole issue of deprivation and its resulting attempts at intervention become even more urgently in need of reassessment.

Thus, due to misconceptions and misevaluations by interventionists and educators, there has been created an educational system that either destroys an already functionally adequate system of behavior because it is viewed as pathological or one which attempts to impose new behaviors without recognizing (fitting into or building on to) that an adequate system of behavior already exists. This is particularly true in the area of verbal behavior. Since this has been a typical index of intelligence, as evidenced in the work of the majority of deprivation theorists, let us turn to a discussion of language and trace research findings in a somewhat historical progression in order to account for changing interpretations and images of poor children.

Child Language Research

In the significant research in the area of linguistic development and acquisition conducted in or before the early 1960's, most of the experiments divided children by social class and the results are generally in keeping with the deprivation ideology. Cherry (1965); Deutsch (1963); Deutsch and B. Brown (1964); Irwin (1948a, 1948b); John and Goldstein (1964); Keller (1963); Lesser, Fefer,

and Clark (1965); Luban (1963); Templin (1957) and Thomas (1962) found that on all measures, in all the studies, upper socioeconomic level children, no matter the definition, were more advanced in phonology, vocabulary, and sentence structure than poor children. The most notable finding in these studies is that ethnic background and social class affect children differently; ethnicity affects the pattern of mental ability, while social class affects the level of scores across mental-ability scales. On verbal ability Jewish children ranked first, followed by Negroes, Chinese, and, significantly lowest, Puerto Ricans. By contrast, on spatial abilities, the rank order was Chinese, Jewish, Puerto Rican, and Negro. But on all scales and subtests, in all ethnic groupings, middle-class children were significantly superior to poor children (Cazden, 1966, pp. 191-192).

Wolf (1964) and Davé (1963) sought to measure the aspects of environment which correlate with the growth of intelligence and academic achievement; they distinguish between status and process variables. Status can be the family income and educational level of parents; process variables are the kinds of intellectual aspirations for the child and the academic guidance provided at home. Both found high correlations (.76 and .80 respectively) between social class and language development.

Gray and Klaus (1964) outlined the features of the

environment which are critical to language development. These are: context, or the nonverbal setting in which language occurs; stimulation; and, the responses given to children's speech. Let us define these features more fully and list pertinent research in each category in order to expand on the knowledge of situational variables.

I. Context

A. Affective Quality--as mentioned earlier there is widespread acknowledgement of the importance in language development on the mother-child relationship. Provence and Lipton (1962) demonstrated that children reared in home environments display greater verbal ability than institutionalized children. Greater effect is present in the homes of high scorers on reading readiness tests when compared to low scores (Milner, 1951).

B. Adult vs Children--this issue is unresolved. The only substantive statement from research in this area is that the amount of time children spend talking with adults and peers varies among subcultures. Hockett (1950), Jespersen (1922), and Stewart (1964) have observed that children usually affect the linguistic styles of their peers rather than of parents. Contradictory evidence stems from the Inadequate Mother Hypothesis which implies

child-adult speech is an imperative of language development.

C. Contextual Variety--Deutsch and Brown (1964) suggested that varied family activity tends to increase verbal interaction. Ausubel (1964) writes that speech can be enhanced if a child has a wide range of objects which serve as referents. John and Goldstein (1964) argue that generalization and discrimination of abstract words will occur not through simple exposure, but rather from participation with a more verbally mature person.

D. Signal-to-Noise Rates--This implies that noise--in the literal sense and in the contest of non-instructional conversation--will contribute to language retardation (Deutsch, 1964).

E. Conversation vs Television--Poor children watch as much television as middle-class children; (Keller, 1963; Wortis, et al., 1963); why isn't this verbal stimulation useful? That television has positive effects on vocabulary is shown by Schramm, Lyle, and Parker (1961), but there is no evidence showing either what children attend while viewing TV or how language heard in this context is processed.

II. Stimulation

A. Conformity to Standard English--Ervin (1964) states

that a child's grammar will usually conform to the norm of his community. She recommends that when studying children's speech, researchers should consider the degree of conformity to the community, rather than the convergence with so-called Standard English.

B. Linguistic Variety--This speaks to the variety in words and grammatical patterns which a child hears. It has been hypothesized that increased variety (termed richness) will increase linguistic quantity. Research by Carroll (1939), Cofer and Musgrave (1963), and Fiske and Maddi (1961) lend credence to the hypothesis, although all the results are somewhat tenuous.

C. Sequence--Deutsch (1963) and Hunt (1964, 1961) have suggested that one of the detrimental effects of living in poor surroundings is the poor quality and lack of systematic sequences in verbalizations.

D. Quantity--Language stimulation can and does vary in quantity; it seems obvious that differences in quantity should affect language development, while frequency of exposure may provide a threshold, beyond which no additional benefits may accrue (Cazden, 1966).

III. Responses to Child's Speech

Research in this area is inconclusive. Whether

reinforcement (responses which corrected omissions) or stimulation (talking or reading to a child) enhances language development is still a topic of debate. (See: Ausubel, 1964; Bloom, Davis & Hess, 1965; Irvin, 1960; Lenneberg, 1964; Province & Lipton, 1962; Rheingold, 1961, 1960; Rheingold, Gervirtz & Ross, 1959; Strodtbeck, 1965; Weissbert, 1963.)

The late 1960's witnessed a shift in thinking. The speech of poor children, rather than being impoverished and retarded, was thought to be different. The poor child has both a mother and a community to which he responds; he does, in fact, speak; he, therefore, has attained some measure of verbal competency. The development of linguistic competence as being synonymous with the development of standard English was seriously questioned and researchers leveled the criticism that the deprivation theorists, in particular, had incorrectly interpreted the different, yet highly abstract and complex, non-standard vernacular as evidence of linguistic imcompetence or underdevelopment (Baratz, J., 1969a). The linguistic competence of black children has been well documented in recent investigations by Baratz (1969b), Dillard (1969), Labov (1969), Labov & Cohen (1967), Stewart (1969), and

Wolfram (1969). Further studies by LaCivita, Kean, and Yamamoto (1966) showed that poor children have the same understanding of grammatical structure as do their middle-class peers. Investigations by Slobin (1967) and Cazden (1965) demonstrated that poor and middle-class children seem to undergo grammatical development at a similar rate. This last conclusion seems logical in the light of what the nativists have theorized about linguistic acquisition.

In linguistics, the nativist theory (see Chomsky, 1965) holds that language development involves innate mechanisms operating on information about the structure of language which the child learns from listening to adult speech. Lenneberg (1964, 1966) outlined the reasons for considering language development as an innately programmed behavior.

1. Language universals such as phonetic systems and syntax are common to all languages.
2. Historical investigations of languages reveal that although spoken languages change, at no time does one find evidence of human speech which can be described as aphonemic or ungrammatical.
3. Specific language disability--characterized by delayed speech onset, poor articulation, and marked

reading and second language disability--in which general intelligence remains unaffected, appears to be inherited.

4. The developmental schedule of language acquisition follows a fixed sequence so that even if the entire schedule is retarded, the order of attainment of linguistic skills remains fixed.

5. Comparisons of children learning non-Indo-European languages with children learning English indicate a high degree of concordance between milestones of speech and motor development.

Then, if language has a logical, ordered, and innate progression, both the less-language and different-language views of poor children may be inadequate because

> First, they speak only of patterns of structural forms and ignore patterns of use in actual speech events. Second, they speak as if the child learns one way to speak, which is reflected in the same fashion and to the same extent at all times (Cazden, 1970, p. 83).

On both theoretical and practical grounds, the dichotomy (less and different language) is no longer acceptable in light of what Kagan (1967) termed "relativism" in psychology. To quote Psathas,

> When Kagan uses the term "relativistic," he "refers to a definition in which context and the state of the individual are part of the defining statement." The "neglected situation" as Goffman (1964) has called it and the state of the individual, particularly his internal symbol manipulating state, need to be considered. . . . The "context" that he refers to is one that has <u>socially</u> defined

> stimulus value. The social definitions for a situation are pregiven; i.e., exist before the psychologist or experimenter enters on the scene. He must, therefore, understand what these are and how they are perceived by the subject before he can claim to understand why the subject behaves the way he does. The "state of the individual" includes not only his biological and physiological state but his interpretive structuring of the world as he experiences it, based on his previous socialization experiences as a member of the culture (Psathas, 1968, p. 136).

Communicative competency, in this context, is seen as the options of the characteristics of the speech situation as the child perceives it on the basis of past experience.

> We observe that a particular child in a particular situation either makes or fails to make a particular utterance. Traditionally, we have related that utterance only to some characteristics of the child, such as his social-class background, while ignoring characteristics of the situation which are at least equally influential (Cazden, 1970, p. 86).

The first breakthrough into the situational variables was in the field of sociolinguistics. A study conducted by Susan Ervin-Tripp (1964) began to investigate the specifics of who says what to whom, how, and in what situations. More contemporary inquiries have shown more substantive results:

1. Standberg (1969) found that four and five-year-olds talked more about a toy and a twenty-second film of that toy than they did about a still-color photo of it.

2. Standberg and Griffith (1968) gave preschoolers cameras loaded with color film. The children talked more spontaneously, with longer and more complex utterances, about pictures taken at home of personal objects than they did about pictures taken under adult supervision during the camera orientation period.

3. Cowan, et al. (1967), using ten colored pictures from magazines and a mixture of children in accordance with age, sex, and socioeconomic class, concluded that "the implicit assumption that magnitude of mean length of response is a property of the subject independent of his setting should be permanently discarded" (Cowan, et al., 1967, p. 202).

4. Williams and Naremore (1969a) spoke with fifth grade children about a television program. They concluded that "the language used by the child in an interview is as much a reflection of his linguistic capabilities" (Williams and Naremore, 1969b, p. 791).

It has also been shown that situational variables including task, as well as listener, significantly affect children's speech (Cazden, 1970). Two landmark studies which demonstrated that mixed situational variables--i.e., topic, task, and listener--help or hinder children's

speech are those conducted by Houston (1971) and Labov (1969).

Based on the assumption that the methods employed to elicit speech from poor children took place in situations in which children were made defensive and uncomfortable--where the most efficient behavior was silence or nonsensical responses--Susan Houston (1971) conducted research with black children in Northern Florida. She examined some of the assumptions (the author refers to them as "myths") concerning the language of poor children and proceeds to disagree with the theory of deprivation. She argues, instead, for a consideration of the crucial role of sociolinguistic variables in the speech performance of children:

> To be sure, lack of reinforcement for linguistic behavior must have an effect on the young child. Most probably, it is effective in limiting the use of language in non-reinforcing contexts (Houston, 1971, p. 950).

In her research she found that children used two registers. (Ranges of language styles were found which have in common their appropriateness to a given situation of environment.) These registers were:

> . . . termed by us the School and Nonschool register, because the first appeared primarily in school settings and with teachers and the second in other settings. However, the School register also was used with all persons perceived by the children as in authority over them or studying them in any way . . . and in any formal and constrained situations. . . . One may note that the characteristics of the

> School register include most of the observations given . . . as indications of disadvantaged nonfluency. It should be added that the content expressed in this register tends to be rather limited and non-revelatory of the children's attitudes, feelings, and ideas (Houston, 1971, pp. 952-53).

The idea of a school register seems to indicate that any school-like situation--the one-to-one interview, for example--would tend to make these children relatively non-verbal. This finding would tend to explain the deficit interpretations of Bereiter and Engelman and Bernstein. A more detailed discussion of this phenomenon is contained in a report by Labov (1969). In interviews with black children in Harlem, he has shed some new light on the subject of sociolinguistic variables and gone on to reinterpret some previous data and their subsequent images they produce. He states that,

> The linguistic behavior reported by Bereiter is merely the product of a defensive posture which children adopt in an alien and threatening situation. Such behavior can be produced at will in any group by changing the relevant sociolinguistic variables (Labov, 1969, p. 1).

In other words, Labov does not necessarily take issue with the results of interviews with poor children or other methods of getting language samples from them; he does argue that the data derived from such situations is typically misinterpreted. He maintains that asymmetrical situations in which a large, controlling adult runs an interview with a small, controlled child (a situation

"where anything he says can literally be held against him,") (Labov, 1966, p. 6) results in the child's avoiding saying anything. Furthermore, "if one takes this interview as a measure of the verbal capacity of the child, it must be his capacity to defend himself in a hostile and threatening situation" (Labov, 1969, p. 6).

The bulk of his report details the initial, nonverbal performances of black children to the interview situation. Slowly, by altering the symmetry of the interview setting (interviewer sitting on the floor with him in dialect, and allowing the child to bring his best friend to the session) a much fuller and richer sampling of the child's language repertory was gained. Labov goes on to analyze the interview data and to make a strong argument that such speech is a flexible and logical mode of communication. He generalized from the interview material:

> One can now transfer this demonstration of the sociolinguistic control of speech to other test situations--including IQ and reading tests in school. . . . The power relationships in a one-to-one confrontation between adult and child are too asymmetrical. This does not mean that some Negro children will not talk a great deal when alone with an adult, or that an adult cannot get close to any child. It means that the social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behavior and that an adult must enter in the right social relation with a child if he wants to find out what a child can do: this is just what many teachers cannot do (Labov, 1969, p. 11).

One might reasonably assume, then, that language itself is not a skill, but is more in the nature of an

innate property of the organism; but, collecting, interpreting of clues, and reacting to them linguistically can be seen as a skill--one so securely internalized as to be used unconsciously and that the situational variables may dictate how a child responds to verbal stimuli. It seems also reasonable to assume that any child--poor or middle-class--would tend to assume a nonverbal or defensive posture when confronted with a threatening or asymmetrical situation. The main thrust of this research is to create, in their grossest parameters, both symmetrical and asymmetrical situations to the end of determining whether social situations bear any significant relationship to the verbal responses of poor and middle-class children. With this in mind, let us turn to the next section of this writing.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Description of Activities

Forty preschool children, ages four and five, from three local day care centers will be interviewed. Since it is not the purpose of this research to draw ethnic or racial comparison, all the children will be of Mexican-American descent judged on the basis of a Spanish surname. However, since the investigator believes that socioeconomic status is a factor of strong influence and a viable means of comparison, the sample of children will be equally divided between middle and lower class as they are represented in the population of this city. Of course, the division into economic class will not be exact, but rather, children will be judged either lower or middle class according to which of the three centers they attend. It appears that the division should be relatively accurate, as two of the centers are located in the more affluent neighborhood; tuitional costs are substantial. (Approximately $80.00 monthly for half day attendance.) The third center is located in the core area and draws children from the poorest of the poor families. (The reported annual income for employed redidents of the core area is less than $3,500.00).

Two interviewers (one male Chicano and one female Anglo) will establish either a symmetrical or asymmetrical situation with each child. Symmetry will be operationally defined as follows:

1. Neither child nor interviewer controls the social situation; both should be in comfortable and familiar physical surroundings.
2. The child and interviewer should be of the same sex.
3. The child and interviewer should be of the same ethnic or racial group.
4. The child and interviewer should be of the same socioeconomic class.
5. The child and interviewer should speak with the same dialectical or regional accent.
6. The interview should consist of questions that relate to a child's experiences up to the actual interview. This might encompass regional, ethnic, socioeconomic, dialectic and sex of the interview-child considerations. (Ethnic here is meant to include the values of the culture, including modes of life and normal and/or codes of word usages.)

These considerations are too complex for the scope of this study in terms of what money, time, the writer's experience, (i.e., reality) will allow. Therefore, based on intuition and the literature on speech elicitation in

interview situations, this study will seek to compound the various factors as outlined above and hopefully create the grossest symmetrical situation in the most parsimonious manner. It is the aim, therefore, to load, in a bi-polar manner, as many of the symmetrical factors into one interview situation, toward the end of making the interview situation as relevant and comfortable to the child as reality will allow.

The interview for poor children will:

1. be conducted by a man who typifies the macho model so highly regarded and popularized by modern Chicano culture;
   a. heavy-set, virile young men
   b. facial hair
   c. fashionably long hair
   d. southwestern "in" clothes: boots, Levi's, colorful shirts, etc.
   e. a Chicano dialect with slang and accent typical of New Mexico
2. be conducted in the child's nursery school to insure familiarity with surroundings. Ideally, the interviews should be held in the home, but again reality dictates.
3. contain informational questions which will sample the child's experiences up to the interview.

4. be conducted in Chicano dialect.

The interviews for the middle class children will:

1. be conducted by typically "Anglo" women. This is done in the light of typical middle class children's experience in the female oriented school situation.
2. be held in the child's nursery school.
3. be asking for information that the middle class child should know, as has been demonstrated in other intelligence measuring situations.
4. conducted without dialect--no accent or slang, save that which is typical of middle class children.

The situations cited should elicit the best possible verbalizations from each socioeconomic group of children. Reversing the situations (poor children with Anglo interviewer and Anglo questions and middle class children with Chicano interviewer and questions) should create asymmetry and ultimtately depress the verbalizations for each group.

The research design will proceed as pictured on the following page with five children in each cell.

Permission to interview the children has been secured along with two interviewers meeting the requirements as stated above.

	MIDDLE CLASS		POOR	
	Dialect	No Dialect	Dialect	No Dialect
Middle Class Questions	1 asymmetry	2 symmetry	3 asymmetry	4 asymmetry
Chicano Questions	5 asymmetry	6 asymmetry	7 symmetry	8 asymmetry

The interview schedule has been designed to conform to the dimensions of the cognitive domain as outlined by Bloom, et al. (1961) in the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Because of the ages of the subjects, the questions asked will deal only in the realm of Knowledge and Comprehension. These are the lowest levels and are defined as follows: Knowledge is "the recall of specific and isolable bits of information. This refers primarily to what might be called the hard core of facts or information in each field of knowledge" (Bloom, et al., 1956, p. 63). Generally, these are symbols which have some concrete referent and they are at a fairly low level of abstraction.

Comprehension is defined as knowledge of what is being communicated and the ability to make some use of the material or the ideas it contains. Comprehension includes objectives, behaviors, or responses which represent and

an understanding of the literal message contained in a communication (Bloom, et al., 1956, p. 89).

The interview will be limited to six questions, to avoid fatigue and/or boredom, and will be presented to the children in each socioeconomic stratum in comparable form.

Interview Schedule

	Anglo Questions	Chicano Questions
1.	What is a shoe?	What is a zapato?
2.	What is shame? (To be ashamed?)	What is verguenza?
3.	What is stew?	What is posole?
4.	What do you do at a wedding reception?	What do you do at a wedding dance?
5.	How do you make bread?	How do you make tortillas?
6.	What is a hose used for?	What is an irrigation ditch used for?

A pilot study conducted on a small sample of children revealed that both Anglo and Chicano children will respond to these items.

Analysis of Data

It is not the aim of this research to delve deeply into linguistic analysis. As stated above, the specific aim is to examine whether social situations which constitute symmetry, tend to heighten or suppress verbal output. The

researcher realizes, however, that no cogent recommendations or conclusions can materialize without even a cursory discussion of the quality and quantity of the children's speech. Toward this end, while attempting not to become overly technical, the interviews will be examined along the following dimensions.

1. Quantity--there will be a count of running words produced by the children in response to the interview questions. Also realizing that children may speak when prompted, the data will also account for cues given by the interviewers in each of the question-answer periods.

2. Quality--the elicited speech will then be broken down into various sentence components. An estimate of sentence complexity will be determined via the minimal T-unit index, as described by Hunt (1965). A T-unit is simply the smallest grammatical unit which can be considered a sentence. Also, the use of nouns, adjectives and adverbs will be examined as a further index of speech complexity. An average number for each treatment will be computed.

Justification for T-Unit

As Labov (1969) argued, dialects do not differ in complexity or length, but rather in surface forms. The children selected in this study will be native English speakers for whom English is dominant, as research has indicated it is for the majority of Spanish-surnamed children in Albuquerque.* What we have in Albuquerque is an ethnically determined dialect of English, not unlike

*Personal communications with Dr. Kathy Timmins, University of New Mexico graduate in linguistics.

the ethnically determined dialect of blacks. The purpose of this research is to gather an assessment of verbal volubility in grossest terms, rather than to assess the kinds of surface forms employed in the speech of Chicano children. The T-Unit appears to be the fairest vehicle toward this assessment because it measures length while accounting for complexity. Usage of the T-Unit as a measure of the quality of children's speech is congruent to Labov's logical analysis in its relative neutrality in dealing with surface forms. Further, the T-Unit will serve as a comparative basis only within the parameters of this research; there are no predicted or expected levels of performance against which these children will be measured, as is the case in many of the other assessing instruments.

In the past the index for verbal maturity was sentence length, because most adults had the impression that younger children speak and/or write shorter sentences. But, before any discussion of sentence length is meaningful, one must define what is to be taken as a sentence. The most obvious answer is that a sentence is any exposition, written or verbal, which is capable of being placed between a capital letter and some terminal punctuation. This definition has the singular advantage of being objective, even though it is naive. Listening to the speech of younger children reveals that they build sentences far better than they punctuate. Children, for the most part,

do not use terminal punctuation; they either run sentences together or use innumerable and's. Therefore, using the definition of sentences as stated above, the child who uses the least punctuation and the most and's will, unfortunately, be credited with the highest degree of language security.

Later, as a result of the investigation by LaBrant (1934), it was concluded that neither sentence nor clause length is a significant index of maturity. She concentrated her study on what she called the ratio of dependent (subordinate) clauses to all clauses both dependent and independent (main). She called this ratio the subordinate index or ratio and noted that the percentage of dependent clauses increases until age sixteen or above. In other words, clause length does not increase with age, but the subordinate ratio does. Unfortunately, LaBrant employed a procedure wherein she counted coordinated verbs as if they were whole clauses which led to misinterpretation of clause length; counting coordinate verbs as separate clauses would tend to shorten clause length and affect the subordinate ratio substantially.

This study wishes to deal, as nearly as possible, with verbalizations as wholes. The author does not wish to destroy subordination or the coordination between words, phrases, and subordinate clauses. The wish is, rather, to slice children's speech into the shortest intelligible units possible. The purpose can possibly be best served by

the T-Unit, as outlined by Hunt (1965). These are simply the shortest grammatically allowable sentences into which the transcribed verbal data can be segmented. The following will serve to illustrate.

transcription:

I like the movie we saw about Moby Dick the white whale the captain said if you can kill the white whale Moby Dick I will give this gold to the one that can do it and it is worth sixteen dollars they tried and tried but while they were trying they killed a whale and used the oil for the lamps they almost caught the white whale.

Segmentation in T-Units:

1. I like the movie/we saw about Moby Dick, the white whale.
2. The captain said/ if you can kill the white whale, Moby Dick,/ I will give this gold to the one/ that can do it.
3. And it is worth sixteen dollars.
4. They tried and tried.
5. But/ while they were trying/ they killed a whale and used the oil for the lamps.
6. They almost caught the white whale.

There is no trouble here deciding whether an expression should go with the preceding main clause or the following. The and between the main clauses is always taken as part of the second clause; the slant lines indicate the beginning of each new clause. As stated above, this segmentation preserves the subordination between main clauses, but it does destroy the lengthening of sentences by the use of coordinating conjunctions, since and's, and so's, but's, etc. are taken as beginnings of

main clauses. Under this rationale, the coordination with and between T-Units becomes an index of immaturity. The mean length of T-Units per interview situation will be computed for each child in the experiment. Such a mean score will serve as an index of maturity and/or volubility regardless of the surface forms, regional dialect, or sub-standard English usage. There is always the probability that the length of T-Units is an artifact of dialect, but that seems remote. Finally, a comparison will be made for middle and lower class children with regard to treatment, as outlined in the original proposal.

The analysis of the use of adverbs and adjectives in children's speech will be conducted to determine whether the Bernsteinian argument has any relationship to the social situation in which the child is placed.

Once the interviews are transcribed and examined for quality and quantity, the information for each group will be subject to an analysis of variance to determine whether there are independent and interactive effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. (See: Kerlinger, 1964, Chapter 12.) This will be a 2x2x2 factorial experiment: the independent variables are dialect vs. no dialect in presentation (the sex and race of the interviewer will be confounded with dialect), lower or middle class questions, and lower or middle socioeconomic status of the children. The variables for interviewer,

...se, will be controlled via similar training for each to insure that their manner and delivery are comparable. The dependent variable will, of course, be the quantity and quality of elicited speech.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The interviews were conducted as specified in the preceding chapter. Circumstance was such that one child will be eliminated from the study and, therefore, the following tables show results from thirty-nine rather than forty subjects. Fortunately, the missing interview does not confound the results sufficiently to render the rest of the data invalid. The only change from the proposed analysis will be that the data be treated with an unbalanced design model. The use of adjectives and adverbs by the children was negligible and this particular analysis will be eliminated from the study.

The object of this research was to create symmetry and asymmetry to varying degrees for both middle class and poor children. Placed on a continuum from the least symmetrical (asymmetry) to the most symmetrical situations, the treatments for Middle Class Children were ranked in the following manner:

Cell 1--asymmetrical (Middle Class Questions with Dialect)

Cell 2--symmetrical (Middle Class Questions without Dialect)

Cell 5--most asymmetrical (Chicano Questions with Dialect)

Cell 6--more asymmetrical (Chicano Questions without Dialect)

With the same reasoning, the treatments for Poor Children were ranked as follows:

Cell 3--asymmetrical (Middle Class Questions with Dialect)

Cell 4--most asymmetrical (Middle Class Questions without Dialect)

Cell 7--symmetrical (Chicano Questions without Dialect)

Cell 8--more asymmetrical (Chicano Questions without Dialect)

The reader will bear in mind that there is no numerical value placed on these rankings as comparisons will only be drawn within the parameters of this research. (See Table 1, page 56)

An analysis of the mean scores for each treatment indicates that, in general, the Middle Class Children responded better to the interview situation regardless of the sex of the interviewer, use of Dialect, or type of questions asked. ($p < .05$; two tailed test) There appears, then, to be no truly asymmetrical situation, in terms of volubility of speech, for this sample of Middle Class Children, save the one in which they were asked Chicano

TABLE 1

RUNNING WORD COUNT

MEAN PER TREATMENT

	Middle Class Children		Poor Children	
	Dialect	No Dialect	Dialect	No Dialect
Middle Class Questions	1 48.0	2 49.6	3 40.0	4 27.0
Chicano Questions	5 58.0*	6 31.8	7 51.6**	8 27.2

*Significant at .10 level of probability; one tailed test

**Significant at .025 level of probability; one tailed test

questions, without dialect by an Anglo woman in Cell 6. Quite surprisingly, the results show that this sample of Middle Class Children performed best in a situation where they were asked Chicano Questions in Dialect by a Chicano male interviewer.

On the other hand, the Poor Children performed as was predicted; although they scored significantly better in both of the interviews conducted in Dialect, their highest rate of volubility is found in Cell 7 where a Chicano male asked them Chicano Questions in Dialect.

Treating the data from Poor Children and Middle Class Children as though they were two separate studies, t-test computations on each of the possible pairs of means per treatment reveals that Middle Class Children produced significantly more words per interview in Cell 5. ($p < .10$; one tailed test.) Poor children also produced significantly more words in the identical situation, however, since this result is significant at the .025 level of probability (one tailed test), it is more meaningful than that of the Middle Class Children in this sample. This tends to indicate that the concept of symmatry may be more applicable to Poor Children. Further documentation is needed before that statement can be made with any precision.

Children in this study speak or respond better, in terms of grammatical structure, to their respective questions (Middle Class Children with Middle Class Questions

TABLE 1.1

WORD COUNT (ANOVA)

Source	df	SS	F-test
Class (C)	1	906.57	2.14*
Interviewer-Dialect (D)	1	2331.16	5.50**
Questions (Q)	1	.75	.0018
C X D	1	113.36	.27
C X Q	1	279.28	.66
D X Q	1	857.92	2.03*
C X D X Q	1	153.69	.36
ERROR	29	12,285.95	

*Significant at .10 level of probability; one-tailed test

**Significant at .05 level of probability; two-tailed test (.025; one tailed)

TABLE 1.2

GRAPH OF RUNNING WORDS FOR ALL SUBJECTS

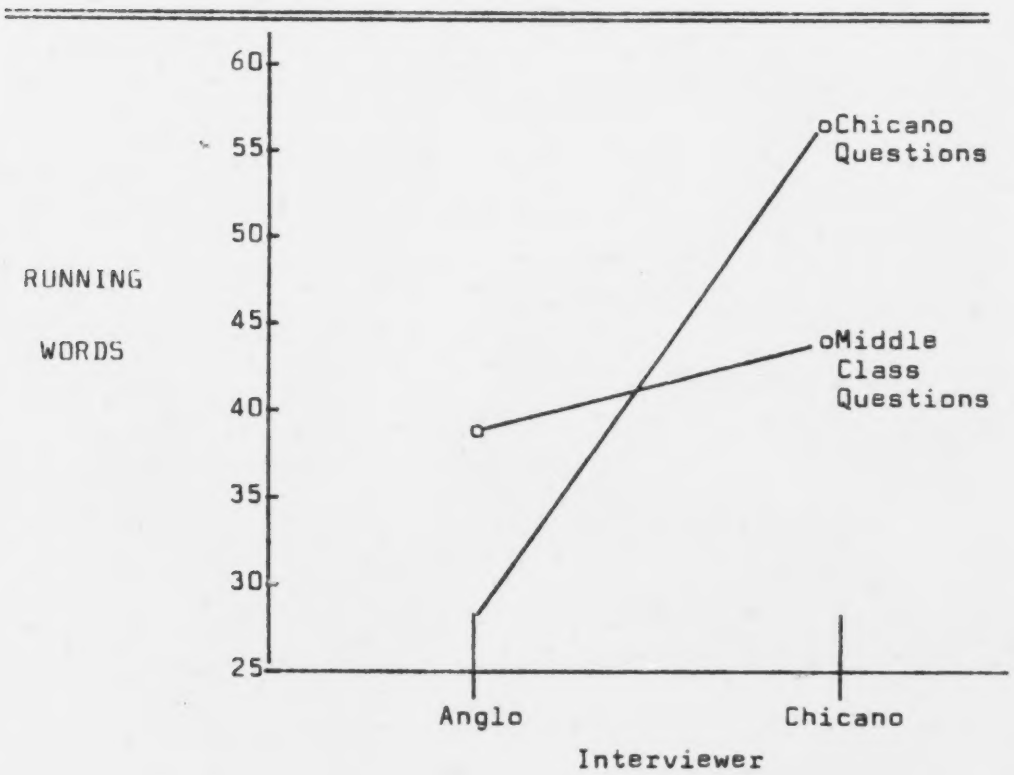

TABLE 2

TERMINABLE UNITS

MEAN PER TREATMENT

	Middle Class Children		Poor Children	
	Dialect	No Dialect	Dialect	No Dialect
Middle Class Questions	1 9.2	2 6.6	3 5.6	4 3.0
Chicano Questions	5 7.0	6 3.8	7 8.6	8 3.0

and Poor Children with Chicano Questions) when questioned by a male Chicano interviewer in Dialect. This is somewhat contradictory to the evidence in Table 1; the Poor Children produced terminable units in proportion to their running word count. Middle Class Children, while they produced more words in Cell 5, actually uttered more sentences when answering Middle Class Questions presented in Dialect. This most probably can be attributed to the fact that Middle Class Children answered the Middle Class Questions with more precision than they did the Chicano Questions. Further discussion of this phenomenon will be found in the next chapter.

The Poor Children did not do as well, again in terms of grammatical structure, when questioned by an Anglo woman, irrespective of the type of question; Middle Class Children score consistently higher in all areas, as evidenced in running wrod count and terminable units, except when asked Chicano Questions by an Anglo woman without Dialect. The reader will note that there is no significant differences between the mean scores in Cells 6 and 8. Does this infer that the perceptions of Middle Class Children simply do not include the possibility of being asked Chicano Questions by an Anglo woman? As with the Poor Children in this sample, is this an asymmetrical situation in which they will not respond?

TABLE 3

WORDS PER TERMINABLE UNIT

MEAN PER TREATMENT

	Middle Class Children		Poor Children	
	Dialect	No Dialect	Dialect	No Dialect
Middle Class Questions	1 4.67	2 3.88	3 3.94	4 3.79
Chicano Questions	5 4.43	6 4.52	7 3.56	8 3.78

As a measure of grammatical maturity, the number of words per terminable unit was computed. The indication, although slight, is that Middle Class Children respond at a significantly higher level of grammatical maturity in all treatments. ($p. < .10$; one tailed test.) It is interesting to note here that although running word count and terminable units were depressed in Cell 6, (Chicano Questions presented without Dialect by an Anglo woman) the depression has had no significant effect on the maturity of their responses.

TABLE 3.1

WORDS PER TERMINABLE UNIT (ANOVA)

Source	df	SS	F-test
Class (C)	1	3.31	1.91*
Interviewer-Dialect (D)	1	.22	.13
Question (Q)	1	.00	.00
C X I	1	.32	.19
C X Q	1	.35	.20
I X Q	1	.88	.51
C X I X Q	1	.14	.08
ERROR	28	48.44	

*Significant at .10 level of probability; one tailed test

TABLE 4

CUES FROM INTERVIEWERS

MEAN PER TREATMENT

	Middle Class Children		Poor Children	
	Dialect	No Dialect	Dialect	No Dialect
Middle Class Questions	1 12.4	2 9.8	3 6.4	4 6.4
Chicano Questions	5 13.5	6 6.6	7 13.6	8 12.6

A cue is defined as any utterance made by the interviewers which would further speech from a child. There is no distinction made between conversational remarks such as "do you like your shoes?" and prodding cues such as "can you tell me more about an irrigation?" This is clearly a mistake in the design; although the interviewers were instructed to keep cues at a minimum, there was no instruction regarding conversational remarks. The result here becomes a chicken-egg controversy; do the interviewers give more cues because the children speak more readily, or do the children speak readily, or do the children speak more because the interviewers give more cues? In other words, who charmed whom? Listening to the actual tapes reveals that the voice inflection on the part of the interviewers is the same throughout; all the cues are questions and stated as questions. There is no way to discern what was meant as a prod or what was meant to be a conversational remark. What is necessary is a judgement concerning what is a prod and what is a conversational remark.

The mean scores presented in Table 4 account for all cues given per treatment. The Chicano male interviewer tended to give more cues in all situations than did the Anglo woman with the exception of Cell 8 where she asked Chicano Questions of Poor Children.

TABLE 5

WORDS PER CUE

MEAN PER TREATMENT

	Middle Class Children		Poor Children	
	Dialect	No Dialect	Dialect	No Dialect
Middle Class Questions	1 4.56	2 3.98	3 3.38	4 4.35
Chicano Questions	5 4.38	6 4.86	7 3.78	8 2.20

Although these results are tentative in that cuing is confounded, there is a significant interaction at the .10 level of probability among Poor Children due to cuing. In effect, the cues seemingly set up a symmetrical situation for Poor Children: they responded better to the Middle Class Questions without Dialect and to the Chicano Questions with Dialect when cuing is accounted for by dividing the number of running words by the number of cues given. In this analysis Poor Children do not assume a defensive posture when asked Middle Class Questions without Dialect by an Anglo woman or when asked Chicano Questions by a Chicano male in Dialect. And, although the situation in Cell 4 (Middle Class Questions without Dialect) may be asymmetrical, it may, in fact, be "socially" acceptable to these children--they may not necessarily like the situation, but they have seemingly grown accustomed to it via their interactions with the world at large.

The preponderance of words per cues in Cell 1, 6, 7, and 4 causes a flip-flop effect which, in turn, causes the three way interaction between class, interviewer, and questions to be significant. T-test computations (See Table 5) reveal that this interaction actually does not occur between Cells 1 and 6, but it does occur between Cells 4 and 7, although only slightly.

TABLE 5.1

WORDS PER CUE (ANOVA)

Source	df	SS	F-test
Class (Poor vs Middle Class) (C)	1	10.04	2.45*
Interviewer Dialect vs No Dialect((I)	1	.27	.06
Question (Q)	1	.81	.20
C X I	1	.23	.06
C X Q	1	3.60	.88
Q X I	1	1.86	.45
C X I X Q	1	7.45	1.82*
ERROR	29	118.87	

*Significant at .10 level of probability; one tailed test

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study attempted to create symmetrical and asymmetrical situations in varying degrees for both middle class and poor Spanish-surnamed preschool children in order to determine whether social situations have any effect on the volubility of children's speech. The data for this sample show:

1. there is no significantly asymmetrical situation for the Middle Class Children as operationally defined within this research design. However, they have difficulty dealing with an Anglo woman asking Chicano Questions without Dialect.
2. that the Poor Children responded as predicted in both the symmetrical and asymmetrical situations. They spoke with greater volubility when asked either Chicano or Middle Class Questions in Dialect by a Chicano male interviewer.
3. tentatively that ($p < .10$)
   a. in general, Middle Class Children have greater volubility regardless of the situational variables.

b. there is for all children an interaction between Dialect and Question; all the children in this study responded best to the Chicano Questions when asked by a Chicano male interviewer.

c. Poor Children respond well to Middle Class Questions when cued.

d. Middle Class Children respond well to Chicano Questions when cued.

e. Middle Class Children have slightly greater grammatical maturity than the Poor Children in this sample.

4. conclusively ($p < .025$) that the Poor Children of this sample performed best in the symmetrical situation where a Chicano male interviewer asked Chicano Questions in Dialect.

The nondifferentiation between cues and conversational remarks is the outstanding flaw in the design. The use of Terminable Units, as cited in Chapter III, was opportune because this particular measure of the quality of elicited speech has no inherent cultural bias. The measure is restrictive, however, because it only accounts for complete sentences. Many of the children's responses were correct and indicated an implicit understanding of the questions, but they were not Terminable Units. True, a free speech situation might elicit more Terminable Units,

but this is not in keeping with the reality of school, testing, and interviewing situations in which intellectual assessments are usually made. What is needed is a more flexible assessment of the quality of speech which will account for all the responses without class or cultural bias. Perhaps a feasible extension would be to assume that non-sentences are elliptical phrases and therefore acceptable as Terminable Units on the basis that a subject and/or verb is implicit in their meaning.

In terms of quality and quantity of elicited speech, this study found that Spanish-surnamed children, socioeconomic class or situational variables, notwithstanding, will speak more complete sentences and with greater volubility to a young Chicano interviewer than they will to an Anglo woman. As the reader will recall, this was an expectation for only the Poor Children; that the Middle Class Children responded as well or better in the same situation is a promising, and yet bewildering, finding which causes several questions to arise: 1) Was this particular Chicano a better interviewer? It is true that he gave more cues than the Anglo woman, but what of the quality of the cues and/or tenor in which he gave cues and asked questions? Was there more affect from the Chicano? 2) Because of his mod dress and general appearance, did the Chicano male assume the role of an older sibling to all the children, while the woman was seen more in the light of an authority figure?

Clearly there is a need for replication. Only two interviewers were used in this study; by making the interviewer a fixed effect, the research established with some certainty that an interviewer effect does, indeed, exist. But, as subjects in any population are a random variable, so, then, are interviewers. A design, which varies the interviewers, thus making them a random variable, would further illuminate the phenomenon of the interviewer effect and establish more concretely to what degree it exists.

This study might warrant replication on the basis of the same design, but with an alternation of the interviewers. For instance:

1. by using only women interviewers, both Anglo and Chicano, it may become clear that Spanish-surnamed children do not respond well to women, in general, or they prefer Chicano to Anglo women.
2. an interview situation using only Anglo and Chicano men may duplicate or deny the findings of this study.
3. mixing the interviewers, Anglo and Chicano men and women, might establish that Spanish-surnamed children will respond only to certain men and/or women.

A testing situation cited in the introduction documents higher I.Q. test scores for Spanish-surnamed

children tested by a male Chicano tester. Is this a one-time occurrence, or can the result be replicated? And, what of the teacher-learner situation? Do Spanish-surnamed children learn best from an Anglo, a Chicano, a man or a woman?

Socioeconomic status is a viable means of comparison, but a highly refined definition of socioeconomic status is necessary, one which includes how children feel and behave, as well as the life and learning style in which they participate. Yearly income, education of parents, and geographic location of the home are too gross to say anything specific because of the tremendous variations within socioeconomic groups. Many college students receive Welfare assistance and have children enrolled in the free day care centers in core areas of large cities. In many instances, blue collar workers earn substantially greater salaries than college graduates and might choose to live in the more affluent sections of town. Also, in this age of courtesy promotion there may be, and probably are, high school graduates who are illiterate. These factors need to be taken into serious consideration and the life and learning styles inherent in all aspects of socioeconomic status require study before researchers can further define the abilities of children whether they be poor, middle class, or whatever.

One of the most contradictory aspects of this research, which serves to heighten the need for more refined

definitions of socioeconomic status, was the finding that the Middle Class Children responded to a Chicano interviewer asking Chicano Questions in Dialect and they tended not to respond to an Anglo woman asking the identical questions without Dialect. Can this be an effect of living style? One possibility for investigation is intermarriage between Chicano men and Anglo women. Do middle class, Spanish-surnamed children have a predominance of Anglo mothers and Chicano fathers? Is an Anglo woman asking Chicano questions relatively incongruent with their perceptions and past experiences because many of their neighbors and teachers are Anglo women who do not ask Chicano questions such as those posed by this study? Perhaps an elderly (grandmother-type) Chicano woman may be able to elicit responses to Chicano questions.

What of machismo? The concept also requires clarification. Is there a significant aspect of the Mexican-American culture which allows the child the option of speaking or not speaking to a woman; is there something that either commands or allows a child to respond more fully to a man?

Of interest are the interviewer observations, which revealed that Poor Children in this sample are seemingly more independent. The center attended by the Poor Children and one of the preschools attended by the Middle Class Children were comprised of various out-buildings and a main,

administrative office. In both cases the children were brought to the main building for the interview; in all instances, the Middle Class Children asked to be escorted to their respective rooms. The Poor Children, without exception, preferred to find their own way, unescorted, back to their rooms.

The Anglo woman interviewer found that the Middle Class Children who did not speak, did so consistently. If they were nonresponsive during the interview, they were also resistant to conversation prior to the interview. These early conversations were intended to establish rapport. Quite the opposite is true for the Poor Children. All were glib and animated during the short walk from their classrooms to the main building, but the moment the interview began, they retreated into silence. There is, indeed, something to be said for symmetry. When the Poor Children felt they were in control of the situation, they spoke; once they lost control, they assumed what may be described as defensive postures and they chose not to speak. The effect was shocking; the situations (one symmetrical, the other asymmetrical) presented the interviewer with two different, almost diametrically opposed, aspects of the same child.

A promising note were the Middle Class Children's fluent and grammatically mature responses to Chicano Questions in Dialect. This is clearly an advantage, for the

child who comprehends a dialect and speaks standard English is able to participate with fullness in two worlds. What of tne child who comprehends dialect well, but only speaks with that dialect or regional accent? Is that a disadvantage toward full participation and acceptance in the world at large? Frederick Williams (1971) speaks of the Stereotype Hypothesis in which people associate types of speech with types of people. Williams takes speech as meaning something as broad as language itself, dialect, and even speculates that it may include the manner in which speech varies from situation to situation (p. 381). The Stereotype Hypothesis links speech, attitude, social structure, and self-fulfilling prophecy which ". . . leads us to expect that stereotypes associated with speech types in turn become predictions of the types of behaviors and social attitudes exercised in that situation" (Williams, 1971, p. 382). In other words, in a situation,

1. speech varieties (dialects) serve as social identifiers;
2. these elicit stereotypes held by the listener;
3. listeners tend to act in accord with the stereotypes;
4. and, we translate our attitudes into social reality.

Woodworth and Salzer (1971) found the Stereotype Hypothesis true in the case of Negro speech. By keeping content constant and varying speech from that of black to

white sixth grade males, they found that teachers consistently graded the reports of the white males higher in respect to topic, report, and treatment. (Also see: Goffman's (1959) discussion of backstage verbal behavior, p. 128.)

This study reveals that Poor Children responded correctly to all the questions, Middle Class or Chicano, but they did so with their regional accent or dialect. Will the Stereotype Hypotheses cause the dialect to outweight the correctness of response? Unfortunately, this may be the case. An obvious remedy to this dilemma is careful teacher training or retraining toward the realization that dialect is not synonymous with incorrectness. There may also be some validity to the idea that like should teach like, although this writer does not wish to advocate pluralism. Perhaps a Chicano who speaks with a regional accent or dialect would be the best transmitter and receiver of knowledge for the Chicano child, social class notwithstanding. A Chicano of this kind may well be the best person to deal with poor children in all situations, especially in the teacher of how to function or deal with mainstream society, and more particularly, the language of mainstream society. However, before the teaching process begins, let us turn to a statement for Labov, which may well serve as an excellent word of warning.

> Before we impose middle class verbal style on children from other cultural groups, we should

> find out how much of this is useful for the main work of analyzing and generalizing, and how much is mere stylistic--or even dysfunctional. In high school and college middle class children spontaneously complicate their syntax to the point that instructors despair of getting them to make their language simpler and clearer. In every learned journal one can find examples of jargon and empty elaboration--and complaints about it. Is the "elaborated code" of Bernstein really so flexible, detailed, and subtle as some psycholinguists believe? Is it not also turgid, redundant, and empty? Is it not simply an elaborated style, rather than a superior code or system?
>
> Our work in the speech community makes it painfully obvious that in many ways working-class speakers are more effective narrators, reasoners, and debaters than middle-class speakers who temporaize, qualify, and lose their argument in a mass of irrelevant detail. Many academic writers try to rid themselves of that part of middle-class style that is empty pretension, and keep that part that is needed for precision. But the average middle-class speaker that we encounter makes no such effort; he is enmeshed in verbage, the victim of sociolinguistic factors beyond his control (Labov, 1969, p. 12).

With these thoughts in mind and armed with the evidence from this research, which demonstrates that the Poor Children who participated in this study, can and will speak qualitatively and quantitively better in a symmetrical situation, researchers, now and in the future, can begin to reject the image of the poor child as depicted by the deprivation theorists on the grounds that data have been incorrectly gathered. Perhaps, the argument can be furthered that asymmetrical--typical school, I.Q. test, and interview--situations are no more than measures of the fear-produced and defensive postures of uncomfortable,

threatened children. I.Q., as it has been previously assessed, may not be an intelligence quotient, but rather an intimidation quotient.

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